

gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] will be recognized for 20 minutes, and the gentleman from Hawaii [Mr. ABERCROMBIE] will be recognized for 20 minutes.

The Chair will recognize the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON].

(Mr. SAXTON asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we are considering H.R. 543. With one exception, this bill is identical to H.R. 3487 which passed the House on September 4. That one change deletes a provision which is unacceptable to the other body.

On May 16, I, along with the gentleman from California [Mr. FARR], introduced this bill to reauthorize the National Marine Sanctuaries Act through fiscal year 1999.

The National Marine Sanctuaries Act is implemented by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration through the National Marine Sanctuary Program. The mission of this program is to protect significant marine environmental and cultural resource while ensuring the continuation of all compatible public and private uses. To accomplish this, the program oversees a system of specifically-managed marine areas. These areas include highly valuable environmental and historical features.

Over the past 21 years, Mr. Speaker, 14 national marine sanctuaries have been designed off our Nation's shores, from Massachusetts to Florida, in the Gulf of Mexico, and in Hawaii. Two more are active candidates for designation, one in the Great Lakes and one in the State of Washington.

The bill authorizes funding for the National Marine Sanctuaries Program through fiscal year 1999; directs the Secretary of Commerce to prepare and submit to Congress a long-range plan for the management, recovery and preservation of the U.S.S. *Monitor*; authorizes the Secretary to designate sponsors for the sanctuary program to create, market, and sell symbols and products to promote them; and designates that the money collected from those items sold at the sanctuaries can be retained for use by those sanctuaries.

The bill also adds a Stetson Bank to the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary in Texas; simplifies the designation process for a minor addition to the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, and prohibits user fees in that sanctuary; and requires Congressional approval for designation of a sanctuary in the Northwest Straits in the State of Washington. These are small changes that will allow the system to operate more efficiently and be more responsive to the public's concerns.

Mr. Speaker, finally, I would just like to note that inasmuch as there is a strong rumor here that the House will adjourn sine die somewhere be-

tween now and midnight, that makes today the final day in the 104th Congress. By coincidence, it is also the final day in a 24 year-long distinguished career of our good friend and colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. STUDDS.

So it is fitting that this bill rename the Stellwagon Bank National Marine Sanctuary in honor of our colleague, who, for 22 years, was an active member of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee and, during those 22 years, has more accomplishments than I care to remember at this point, and of course, for the last 2 years he has worked diligently as my counterpart on the Subcommittee on Fish, Wildlife and Oceans of the Committee on Resources.

It is through his very, very diligent efforts and hard-working attitude that I have profited much for the last 12 years during my time here, have learned much, and have been able to call the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS] a great friend and wonderful colleague and, in many instances, a teacher to me with regard to the issues that we have dealt with in those two committees.

So it is my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to make the recommendation that we all vote "aye" today on this bill, inasmuch as it does redesignate this sanctuary, which GERRY STUDDS actually helped to create himself, and, of course, this reauthorization of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act this year will demonstrate our collective commitment to protecting and wisely managing our Nation's marine natural resources.

Therefore, I ask all Members on both sides of the aisle to vote affirmatively on this bill today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

(Mr. ABERCROMBIE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, want to thank the chairman as well and associate myself with all of his remarks, and particularly with those regarding the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS].

I am pleased to note, for whatever pleasant irony there might be, that literally the last provision of this bill is the naming of the sanctuary after the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. STUDDS]. So I trust that all Members will recognize and abide by the request of the chairman.

I have little to add, Mr. Speaker, but rather to supplement just briefly. As indicated, we are asking the House to sign compromise language reauthorizing the National Marine Sanctuaries bill back from the other body in the hope that it will send the bill to the President before adjournment.

This bill contains all that the bill we passed previously does. It embodies the

House-Senate compromise, as had been indicated, that has bipartisan support. And I want to state that for the record. It most certainly is acceptable to the administration.

I want to emphasize that it provides a generous 3-year reauthorization for the program and contains many of the miscellaneous provisions, some of which the chairman pointed out, principally, to enhance the management of individual marine sanctuaries and to give NOAA the authority to raise private funds for sanctuary activities. I think the latter is particularly important.

All around, this is the kind of legislation that has been the rule rather than the exception from our Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Oceans for much the same reasons as outlined by the chairman. I commend him for his hard work and the cooperation of him and the staff and the cooperation of many other individuals on the subcommittee and Committee of the Whole for this bill and the many others that we have had come before us.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I have no more requests for time at this point, and if the gentleman is prepared to yield back, I am prepared to do the same.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say to the chairman what a great pleasure it has been, once again, to be able to work with him, and I look forward to it again. That is by way of sympathetic magic.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the gentleman's remarks and obviously have enjoyed working with him as well.

Mr. Speaker, I will yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 543, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title was amended so as to read: "A bill to reauthorize the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the bill just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.